

their keep, and arrauged everything for their despatch &c. These kittens within a very few days became quite tame."

Mr. Oldfield Thomas exhibited a specimen of a burrowing Rodent apparently allied to the rare *Heterocephalus glaber*, Rüppell, which had been recently presented to the Natural History Museum, and read the following letter from the donor:--

Junior Carlton Club,
Pall Mall, S.W.,
June 15, 1885.

DEAR SIR,—

In looking at my journal I find the following notes under the date January 29, 1885:—

Gerlogobie, Ogardain, Central Somali-land.—“To-day the natives brought into camp a curious little creature, a sort of Mole, length $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, skin bare, with a few stiff hairs. Tail like that of a Hippo. Its toes armed with bristles, and its teeth like those of a Walrus. On being placed on the ground it commenced to dig furiously, using its teeth to loosen the earth with; its eyes were tiny, and its ears simply holes in the sides of its head.”

This little creature, called “Farumfer” by the Somali, throws up in places groups of miniature craters, which exactly represent volcanoes in active eruption; when the little beasts were at work I used frequently to watch them, and found that the loose earth from their excavations was brought to the bottom of the crater, and sent with great force into the air in a succession of rapid jerks, but they themselves never ventured forth from the shelter of their burrows. I caught several by suddenly plunging a sharp-pointed instrument into the volcano, but never succeeded in making good skins of them.

Yours very truly,
E. LORT PHILLIPS, F.Z.S.

Mr. Thomas remarked that no specimen of *H. glaber* had apparently been recorded since Rüppell's original example described just 40 years ago¹; and that it was therefore a matter of great interest to determine whether that author's description of its characters and habits held good on the examination of further specimens, since it had been sometimes supposed that the original type was either immature or diseased, and on that account more or less hairless. This second specimen now proved that Rüppell was quite correct in his description, and that the normal state of the animal was as figured by him. It appeared, however, that the nearest affinities of *Heterocephalus* are not with *Spalax* and *Rhizomys*, as had been supposed by Mr. Alston², who had only Rüppell's figures to go upon, but with *Bathyergus* and *Georychus*, to the latter of which it was very closely allied, differing chiefly in its want of hair, much longer tail, and in its not possessing any premolar teeth.

¹ Mus. Senck. iii. p. 99, pl. vii. (animal), x. (skull), 1845.

² P. Z. S. 1876, p. 86.

Mr. Thomas hoped to be able to give a fuller description, with figures, of this interesting specimen at a future meeting of the Society¹.

Mr. W. T. Blanford exhibited the skull of a *Paradoxurus*, which he believed to be an undescribed form, and made the following remarks:—

The skull now exhibited was sent to me together with a skin, from which unfortunately nearly all the hair had been removed by moths, by the Rev. S. Fairbank, of Ahmednagar in the Bombay Presidency, about two years ago. He had received the specimen from Mr. F. Levinge, who procured it in his own garden at Kodaikanal, on the Palni (or Pulney) hills in the Madura district, Madras Presidency. The natives of the hills called the animal "Kārt-nai," or dog of the woods; and Mr. Fairbank suggested that it might be *Paradoxurus zeylonensis*, Pall. (*P. zeylanicus*, Kelaart), a species hitherto not known to occur elsewhere than in Ceylon. On comparison, however, the skull was found to differ not only from that of *P. zeylonensis*, but from all known species of *Paradoxurus*, in the excessive length of the anterior palatine foramina, which are more than 0·4 inch long (10 millimetres), and extend back as far as a line drawn through the posterior edges of the anterior upper premolars. In all other *Paradoxuri* the foramina are only half as long as in the skull from the Palni Hills, and do not extend back further than a line drawn through the hinder edge of the canines.

On searching amongst specimens in the British Museum, Mr. Oldfield Thomas (to whom I am indebted for much assistance in working out this and other questions connected with Indian zoology) called my attention to a flat skin presented some years since by Mr. F. Day, C.I.E., and different from that of any known *Paradoxurus*. This skin agrees with the description given by Mr. Fairbank, and with the remains of that sent by him; and although the exact locality whence it was procured is uncertain, Mr. Day tells me he is

¹ During the passage of these remarks through the press, I have had, through the kindness of the Directors of the Senckenberg Museum, the opportunity of examining the original type of *H. glaber* described by Rüppell. I find that Mr. Phillips's specimen, while referable to the genus *Heterocephalus*, represents a distinct and very much smaller species, which I would propose to call *H. phillipsi*, after its discoverer. It may be readily distinguished by the following comparative measurements:—

Skull:—	From Lambda to tip of nasals.	Basal length.	Greatest breadth.	Palate length.
	millims.	millims.	millims.	millims.
<i>H. glaber</i>	21·5	(c) 23·2	18·3	13·6
<i>H. phillipsi</i>	16·1	17·5	13·6	9·1

Hind foot:—

<i>H. glaber</i>	21·2
<i>H. phillipsi</i>	16·6

The type of *H. phillipsi* is a fully adult female.
July 30, 1885.

O. T.